CATO MAJOR

OF

OLD AGE.

A Poem.

By the Honourable

Sir *JOHN DENHAM*

Knight of the *BATH.*

In the *SAVOY*,

Printed for *Henry Herringman* at the Sign of the *Anchor* in the Lower-Walk of the *New-Exchange*. 1669.

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TO THE READER.

I Can neither call this Piece *Tully*'s nor my own, being much alter'd from the Original, not only by the change of the Style, but by addition and subtraction. I believe you will be better pleas'd, to receive it, as I did, at the first sight; for to me *Cicero* did not so much appear to write, as *Cato* to speak; and to do right to my Author, I believe no Character of any person was ever better drawn to the life than this. Therefore neither consider *Cicero*, nor Me, but *Cato* himself, who being then rais'd from the dead to speak the language of that Age and Place, neither the distance of place or

time makes it leſs poſſible to raiſe him now to ſpeak ours.

Though I dare not compare my Copy with the Original, yet you will find it mention'd here, how much fruits are improv'd by Grafting; and here, by grafting Verſe upon Proſe, ſome of theſe ſeverer Arguments may receive a more mild and pleaſant taſte.

Cato ſayes (in another place) of himſelf, that he learn'd to ſpeak Greek between the ſeventieth and eightieth year of his Age, beginning that ſo late, he may not yet be too old to learn Engliſh, being now but between his ſeventeenth and eighteenth hundred year. For theſe reaſons I ſhall leave to this Piece no other name than what the Author gave it of

CATO MAJOR.

The

The Preface.

That Learned Critick, the younger Scaliger, comparing the two great Orators, sayes, that nothing can be taken from Demosthenes, nor added to Tully; and if there be any fault in the last, it is the Resumption, or dwelling too long upon his arguments: for which reason having intended to translate this Piece into Prose, (where Translation ought to be strict) finding the matter very proper for Verse, I took the liberty, to leave out what was only necessary to that Age, and Place, and to take, or add what was proper to this present Age, and occasion; by laying his sense closer, and in fewer words, according to the style and ear of these times. The three first parts I dedicate to my old friends, to take off those melancholy reflections, which the sense of Age, Infirmity, and Death may give

them. The last part I think necessary for the Conviction of those many, who believe not, or at least mind not the immortality of the Soul, of which the Scripture speaks only positively, as a Lawgiver, with an Ipse dixit; but it may be, they neither believe that (from which they either make doubts, or sport,) nor those, whose business it is to interpret it, supposing they do it only for their own ends: But if a Heathen Philosopher bring such arguments from reason, nature, and Second Causes, which none of our Atheistical Sophisters can confute, if they may stand convinced, that there is an Immortality of the Soul, I hope they will so weigh the consequences, as neither to talk, nor live as if there were no such thing.

Of

Of Old-Age.

Cato, Scipio, Lælius.

Scipio to Cato.

THough all the Actions of your
Life are crown'd
With Wisdom, nothing makes
them more Renown'd,
Then that those years, which others think extreme,
Nor to your self, nor us uneasie seem,
Under which weight, most like th'old Giant's groan,
When *Ætna* on their backs by *Jove* was thrown.

Cat. What you urge (*Scipio*) from right reason flows,
All parts of Age seem burthensome to those,

Who Virtue's, and true Wisdom's happiness
Cannot discern, but they who those possess
In what's impos'd by Nature, find no grief,
Of which our Age is (next our Death) the chief,
Which though all equally desire to obtain,
Yet *when they have obtain'd it*, they complain;
Such our inconstancies, and follies are,
We say it steals upon us unaware:
Our want of reas'ning these false measures makes,
Youth runs to Age, as Childhood Youth o'retakes;
How much more grievous would our lives appear
To reach th'eight hundreth, then the eightieth year?
Of what, in that long space of time hath past,
To foolish Age will no remembrance last,
My Ages conduct when you seem to admire,
(Which that it may deserve, I much desire)
'Tis my first rule, on Nature, as my Guide
Appointed by the Gods, I have rely'de,

And

And Nature, (which all Acts of life designes)
Not like ill Poets, in the last declines;
But some one part must be the last of all,
Which like ripe fruits, must either rot, or fall,
And this from Nature must be gently born,
Else her (as Giants did the Gods) we scorn.
Lal. But Sir, 'tis *Scipio's*, and my desire,
Since to long life we gladly would aspire,
That from your grave Instructions we might hear,
How we, like you, might this great burthen bear.
Cat. This I resolv'd before, but now shall do
With great delight, since 'tis requir'd by you.
Lal. If to your self it will not tedious prove,
Nothing in us a greater joy can move,
That as old Travellers the young instruct,
Your long, our short experience may conduct.
Cat. 'Tis true, (as the old Proverb doth relate)
Equals with equals often congregate.

Two Consuls (who in years my equals were,) *Caius Salinator.*
When Senators, lamenting I did hear, *Spurius Albinus.*
That Age from them had all their pleasures torn,
And them their former suppliants now scorn,
They, what is not to be accus'd, accuse,
Not others, but themselves their age abuse,
Else this might me concern, and all my friends,
Whose cheerful Age, with Honour, Youth attends,
Joy'd that from pleasure's slavery they are free,
And all respects due to their age they see,
In it's true colours, this complaint appears
The ill effect of Manners, not of years,
For on their life no grievous burthen lies,
Who are well-natur'd, temperate, and wise:
But an inhumane, and ill-temper'd mind
Not any easie part in life can find.
Lal. This I believe, yet others may dispute,
Their age (as yours) can never bear such fruit,

Of

Of Honour, Wealth, and Power, to make them sweet,
Not every one such happiness can meet.
Cat. Some weight your argument (my *Lalius*) bears,
But not so much, as at first sight appears,
This answer by *Themistocles* was made,
(When a *Seriphian* thus did him upbraid,
You those great Honours to your Country owe,
Not to your self) had I at *Seripho*
Been born, such honour I had never seen,
Nor you, if an *Athenian* you had been:
So Age, cloath'd in undecent povertie,
To the most prudent cannot easie be,
But to a fool, the greater his estate,
The more uneasie is his Age's weight,
Age's chief arts, and arms, are to grow wise,
Virtue to know, and known to exercise,
All just returns to Age then Virtue makes,
Nor her in her extremity forsakes,

An Isle to which condemn'd men were banish

The

The sweetest Cordial we receive at last
Is conscience of our virtuous actions past,
I, (when a youth) with reverence did look
On *Quintus Fabius*, who *Tarentum* took,
Yet in his age such cheerfulness was seen,
As if his years and mine had equal been,
His Gravity was mixt with Gentleness,
Nor had his Age made his good humour less,
Then was he well in years (the same that he
Was Consul, that of my Nativity)
(A Stripling then) in his fourth Consulate
On him at *Capua* I in Arms did wait,
I five years after at *Tarentum* was
The Quæstorship, and then our love began,
And four years after, when I Prætor was
He Pleaded, and the *Cincian* Law did pass. * Against Bribery.
With youthful diligence he us'd to ingage,
Yet with the temperate Arts of patient Age

He

He breaks fierce *Hannibal*'s insulting heats;
Of which exploit thus our friend *Ennius* treats,
He by delay restor'd the Common-wealth,
Nor preferr'd Rumour before publick Health.

THE ARGUMENT.

When I reflect on Age, I find there are
Four Causes, which its Misery declare.

1. *Because our Bodies Strength it much impairs;*
2. *That it takes off our Minds from great Affairs:*
3. *Next, That our Sense of Pleasures it deprives:*
4. *Last, That approaching Death attends our Lives.*

Of all these several Causes I'le discourse,
And then of each, in Order, weigh the force.

THE FIRST PART.

1. THe Old from such affairs is only freed,
Which vigourous youth, and strength of
But to more high affairs our age is lent, (body need,
Most properly when heats of youth are spent.
Did *Fabius*, and your Father *Scipio*
(Whose Daughter my Son married) nothing do?

Fabricii,

Fabricii, Coruncani, Curii,
Whose courage, counsel, and authority,
The Roman Common-wealth restor'd, did boast,
Nor *Appius*, with whose strength his sight was lost,
Who when the Senate was to Peace inclin'd
With *Pyrrhus*, shew'd his reason was not blind.
Whither's our Courage and our Wisdom come?
When *Rome* it self conspires the fate of *Rome*.
The rest with ancient gravity and skill
He spake (for his Oration's extant still)
'Tis seventeen years since he had Consul been
The second time, and there were ten between;
Therefore their Argument's of little force,
Who Age from great Imployments would divorce.
As in a Ship some climb the Shrouds, to unfold
The Sails, some sweep the Deck, some pump the Hold;
Whil'st he that guides the Helm, imploys his skill,
And gives the Law to them by sitting still.

Great

Great actions leſs from Courage, ſtrength, and ſpeed,
Then from wiſe Counſels and Commands proceed;
Thoſe Arts Age wants not, which to Age belong,
Not heat, but cold experience makes us ſtrong,
A Conſul, Tribune, General, I have been,
All ſorts of war I have paſt through, and ſeen
And now grown old, I ſeem to abandon it,
Yet to the Senate I preſcribe what's fit.
I every day 'gainſt *Carthage* war proclaim,
(For *Rome*'s deſtruction hath been long her aim)
Nor ſhall I ceaſe till I her ruine ſee,
Which Triumph may the Gods deſigne for thee;
That *Scipio* may revenge his Grandfire's Ghoſt,
VVhoſe life at *Canne* with great Honour loſt
Is on Record, nor had he wearied been
VVith Age, if he an hundred years had ſeen,
He had not us'd Excurſions, Spears, or Darts,
But Counſel, Order, and ſuch aged Arts,

VVhich

Which, if our Ancestors had not retain'd,
The *Senate*'s Name, our Council had not gain'd,
The *Spartans* to their highest Magistrate,
The Name of *Elder* did appropriate:
Therefore his fame for ever shall remain,
How gallantly *Tarentum* he did gain,
With vigilant Conduct, when that sharp reply
He gave to *Salinator*, I stood by,
Who to the Castle fled, the Town being lost,
Yet he to *Maximus* did vainly boast,
'Twas by my means *Tarentum* you obtain'd;
'Tis true, had you not lost, I had not gain'd;
And as much Honour on his Gown did wait,
As on his Arms, in his Fifth Consulate,
When his Colleague *Carvilius* stept aside,
The Tribune of the People would divide
To them the *Gallick*, and the *Picene* Field,
Against the Senate's will, he will not yield,

When

When being angry, boldly he declares
Those things were acted under happy starres,
From which the Commonwealth found good effects,
But otherwise, they came from bad Aspects.
Many great things of *Fabius* I could tell,
But his Son's death did all the rest excell;
(His Gallant Son, though young, had Consul been)
His Funeral Oration I have seen
Often, and when on that I turn my eyes,
I all the Old Philosophers dispise,
Though he in all the Peoples eyes seem'd great,
Yet greater he appear'd in his retreat;
When feasting with his private friends at home,
Such Counsel, such Discourse from him did come,
Such Science in his Art of Augury,
No Roman ever was more learn'd than he;
Knowledge of all things present, and to come,
Remembring all the Wars of ancient *Rome*,

Nor only these, but all the World's beside,
Dying in extreme age, I propheſi'd
That which is come to paſs, and did diſcern
From his Survivors I could nothing learn.
This long diſcourſe was but to let you ſee,
That his long life could not uneaſie be.
Few like the *Fabii* or the *Scipio's* are
Takers of Cities, Conquerors in War,
Yet others to like happy Age arrive,
Who modeſt, quiet, and with vertue live:
Thus *Plato* writing his Philoſophy,
With Honour after ninety years did die,
The *Athenian Story* writ at ninety four
By *Iſocrates*, who yet liv'd five years more,
His Maſter *Gorgias* at the hundredth year
And ſeventh, not his ſtudies did forbear,
And askt, why he no ſooner left the Stage,
Said, he ſaw nothing to accuſe Old Age.

None but the foolish, who their lives abuse
Age, of their own Mistakes and Crimes accuse,
All Commonwealths (as by Record is seen)
As by Age preserv'd, by Youth destroy'd have been;
When the Tragedian *Nevius* did demand,
Why did your Common-wealth no longer stand?
'Twas answer'd, that their Senators were new,
Foolish, and young, and such as nothing knew;
Nature to Youth true Counsels doth dispence,
But with cold prudence Age doth recompence;
But Age ('tis said) will memory decay,
So (if it be not exercis'd) it may;
Or, if by Nature it be dull, and slow,
Themistocles (when ag'd) the Names did know
Of all th' *Athenians*, and none grow so old,
Not to remember where they hid their Gold.
From Age such Art of Memory we learn,
To forget nothing, which is our concern.

Their

Their interest no Priest, nor Sorcerer
Forgets, nor Lawyer, nor Philosopher;
No understanding, Memory can want,
Where Wisdome studious industry doth plant.
Nor does it only in the active live,
But in the quier and contemplative;
When *Sophocles* (who Plays, when aged wrote)
Was by his Sons before the Judges brought,
Because he pay'd the Muses such respect,
His Fortune, Wife, and Children to neglect;
Almost condemn'd, he mov'd the Judges thus,
Hear, but instead of me, my *Oedipus*;
The Judges hearing with applause, at th' end,
Freed him, and said no Fool such Lines had penn'd.
What Poets, and what Orators can
Recount? What Princes in Philosophy?
Whose constant Studies with their Age did strive,
Nor did they those, though those did them survive.

Old Husbandmen I at *Subinium* know,
Who for another year dig, plough, and sow.
For never any man was yet so old,
But hop'd his life one Winter more might hold.
Cæcilius vainly said, each day we spend
Discovers something, which must needs offend,
But sometimes Age may pleasant things behold,
And nothing that offends: He should have told
This not to Age, but Youth, who oftner see
What not alone offends, but hurts, then we
That, I in him, which he in Age condemn'd,
That us it renders odious, and contemn'd.
He knew not vertue, if he thought this truth;
For Youth delights in Age, and Age in Youth.
What to the Old can greater pleasure be,
Then hopeful, and ingenious Youth to see?
When they with rev'rence follow where we lead,
And in strait paths by our directions tread;

And even my converſation here I ſee,
As well receiv'd by you, as yours by me.
'Tis diſ-ingenious to accuſe our Age
Of Idleneſs, who all our powr's ingage
In the ſame Studies, the ſame Courſe to hold;
Nor think our reaſon for new Arts too old.
Solon the Sage his Progreſs never ceaſt,
But ſtill his Learning with his dayes increaſt;
And I with the ſame greedineſs did ſeek
As (water when I thirſt) to ſwallow Greek,
Which I did only learn, that I might know
Thoſe great Examples, which I follow now:
And I have heard that *Socrates* the wiſe
Learn'd on the Lute for his laſt exerciſe,
Though many of the Antients did the ſame,
To improve Knowledge was my only aime.

THE SECOND PART.

NOw in' our second grievance I must break,
That loss of strength makes understanding weak.
I grieve no more my youthful strength to want,
Then young, that of a Bull, or Elephant;
Then with that force content, which Nature gave;
Nor am I now displeas'd with what I have.
When the young Wrestlers at their sport grew warm,
Old *Milo* wept, to see his naked arm;
And cry'd, 'twas dead, Trifler thine heart, and head,
And all that's in them (not thy arme) are dead;
This folly every looker on derides,
To glory only in thy armes and sides.
Our gallant Ancestors let fall no tears,
Their strength decreasing by increasing years;

But

But they advanc'd in Wisdom ev'ry hour,
And made the Common-wealth advance in power.
But Orators may grieve, for in their sides
Rather than heads, their faculty abides;
Yet I have heard old voices loud and clear,
And still my own sometimes the Senate hear.
When th' Old with smooth and gentle voices plead,
They by the ear their well-pleas'd Audience lead:
Which, if I had not strength enough to do,
I could (my *Lælius*, and my *Scipio*)
What's to be done, or not be done, instruct,
And to the Maximes of good life conduct.
Cneius and *Publius Scipio*, and (that man
Of men) your Grandsire the great African,
Were joyful, when the flower of Noble blood
Crowded their Dwellings, and attending stood,
Like Oracles their Counsels to receive,
How in their Progress they should act, and live.

And they whoſe high examples youth obeys,
Are not deſpiſed, though their ſtrength decays.
And thoſe decayes (to ſpeak the naked truth,
Though the defects of Age) were Crimes of Youth.
Intemperate Youth (by ſad experience found)
Ends in an Age imperfect, and unſound.
Cyrus, though ag'd (if *Xenophon* ſay true)
Lucius Metellus (whom when young I knew)
VVho held (after his Second Conſulate)
Twenty two years the high Pontificate;
Neither of thoſe in body, or in mind
Before their death the leaſt decay did find.
I ſpeak not of my ſelf, though none deny
To age (to praiſe their youth) the liberty:
Such an unwaſted ſtrength I cannot boaſt,
Yet now my years are eighty four almoſt:
And though from what it was my ſtrength is far,
Both in the firſt and ſecond *Punick* war,

Nor

Nor at *Thermopyla*, under *Glabrio*,
Nor when I Conſul into *Spain* did go;
But yet I feel no weakneſs, nor hath length
Or Winters quite enervated my ſtrength;
And I, my Gueſt, my Client, or my friend,
Still in the Courts of Juſtice can defend:
Neither muſt I that Proverb's truth allow,
Who would be Antient, muſt be early ſo.
I would be youthful ſtill, and find no need
To appear old, till I was ſo indeed.
And yet you ſee my hours not idle are,
Though with your ſtrength I cannot mine compare.
Yet this Centurion's doth yours ſurmount,
Not therefore him the better man I count.
Milo when entring the Olympick Game,
With a huge Oxe upon his ſhoulder came.
Would you the force of *Milo*'s body find?
Rather than of *Pythagoras*'s mind?

The force which Nature gives with care retain,
But when decay'd, 'tis folly to complain;
In age to wish for youth is full as vain,
As for a youth to turn a child again.
Simple, and certain Nature's wayes appear,
As she sets forth the seasons of the year.
So in all parts of life we find her truth,
Weakness to childhood, rashness to our youth:
To elder years to be discreet and grave,
Then to old age maturity she gave.
(*Scipio*) you know, how *Masinissa* bears
His Kingly Port, at more than ninety years;
When marching with his foot, he walks till night;
When with his horse, he never will alight;
Though cold, or wet, his head is alwayes bare;
So hot, so dry, his aged members are.
You see how Exercise and Temperance
Even to old years a youthful strength advance.

Our

Our Law (becauſe from age our ſtrength retires)
No duty which belongs to ſtrength requires.
But age doth many men ſo feeble make,
That they no great deſign can undertake;
Yet, that to age not ſingly is applid,
But to all man's infirmities beſide.
That *Scipio* (who adopted you) did fall
Into ſuch pains, he had no health at all;
Who elſe had equall'd *Africanus* parts,
Exceeding him in all the Liberal Arts.
Why ſhould thoſe errors then imputed be
To Age alone, from which our youth's not free?
Ev'ry diſeaſe of age we may prevent,
Like thoſe of youth, by being diligent.
When ſick, ſuch moderate exerciſe we uſe,
And diet, as our vital heat renues;
And if our bodies thence refreſhment finds,
Then muſt we alſo exerciſe our minds.

If

If with continual Oyl we not supply
Our Lamp, the Light for want of it will die:
Though bodies may be tir'd with exercise,
No weariness the mind could e're surprise.
Cæcilius the Comedian, when of Age,
He represents the follies on the Stage;
They're credulous, forgetful, dissolute,
Neither those Crimes to age he doth impute;
But to old men to whom those Crimes belong.
Lust, petulance, rashness, are in youth more strong
Than age, and yet young men those vices hate,
Who vertuous are, discreet, and temperate:
And so what we call dotage, seldome breeds
In bodies, but where Nature sow'd the seeds.
There are five Daughters and four gallant Sons,
In whom the blood of Noble *Appius* runs,
With a most num'rous Family beside;
Whom he alone though old, and blind did guide.

Yet his clear-sighted mind was still intent,
And to his business like a Bow stood bent:
By Children, Servants, Neighbours so esteem'd,
He not a Master, but a Monarch seem'd.
All his Relations his admirers were,
His Sons paid reverence, and his Servants fear:
The Order and the ancient Discipline
Of Romans, did in all his actions shine.
Authority (kept up) old age secures,
Whose dignity, as long as life endures,
Something of youth in old age approve,
But more the marks of age in youth I love.
Who this observes, may in his body find
Decrepit age, but never in his mind.
The seven Volumes of my own Reports,
Wherein are all the Pleadings of our Courts,
All noble Monuments of *Greece* are come
Into my hands, with those of ancient *Rome*.

The Pontifical, and the Civil Law,
I study still, and thence Orations draw.
And to confirm my Memory, at night,
What I hear, see, do, by day, I will recite.
These exercises for my thoughts I find,
These labours are the Chariot of my mind;
To serve my friends, the Senate I frequent,
And there what I before digested, vent.
VVhich only from my strength of mind proceeds,
Not any outward force of body needs;
VVhich, if I could not do, I should delight
On what I would contemplate at night.
VVho in such practices their minds engage,
Nor fear, nor think of their approaching age;
VVhich by degrees invisibly doth creep,
Nor do we seem to die, but fall asleep.

THE THIRD PART.

NOw must I draw my forces 'gainst that Host
Of Pleasures, which i' th' Sea of age are lost,
Oh, thou most high transcendent gift of age!
Youth from its folly thus to disengage.
And now receive from me that most divine
Oration of that noble *Tarentine*,
VVhich at *Tarentum* I long since did hear;
VVhen I attended the great *Fabius* there.
Yee Gods, was it man's Nature? or his Fate?
Betray'd him with sweet pleasures poyson'd bait?
VVhich he, with all designs of art, or power,
Doth with unbridled apperite devour;
And as all poysons seek the noblest part,
Pleasure possesses first the head and heart;

Archytas much praised by Horace.

In-

Intoxicating both, by them, she finds,
And burns the Sacred Temples of our Minds.
Furies, which Reasons divine chains had bound,
(That being broken) all the VVorld confound.
Lust, Murder, Treason, Avarice, and Hell
It self broke loose; in Reason's Pallace dwell,
Truth, Honour, Justice, Temperance, are fled,
All her attendants into darkness led,
But why all this discourse? when pleasure's rage
Hath conquer'd reason, we must treat with age.
Age undermines, and will in time surprize
Her strongest Forts, and cut off all supplies.
And joyn'd in league with strong necessity,
Pleasure must flie, or else by famine die.
Flaminius, whom a Consulship had grac'd
(Then Censor) from the Senate I displac'd;
VVhen he in *Gaul* a Consul, made a Feast,
A beautious Curtesan did him request,

To see the cutting off a Prisoner's head;
This Crime I could not leave unpunished,
Since by a private villany he stain'd
That Publick Honour, which at *Rome* he gain'd.
Then to our age (when not to pleasures bent)
This seems an honour, not disparagement.
We, not all pleasures like the Stoicks hate;
But love and seek those which are moderate.
(Though Divine *Plato* thus of pleasures thought,
They us, with hooks and baits, like fishes caught.)
When Quæstor, to the Gods, in Publick Halls
I was the first, who set up Festivalls.
Not with high tastes our appetites did force,
But fill'd with conversation and discourse;
Which Feasts, *Convivial Meetings* we did name.
Not like the Antient Greeks, who to their shame,
Call'd it a *Comporation*, not a Feast;
Declaring the worst part of it the best.

Thoſe Entertainments I did then frequent,
Sometimes with youthful heat and merriment;
But now (I thank my age) which gives me eaſe
From thoſe exceſſes, yet my ſelf I pleaſe
VVith cheerful talk to entertain my gueſts,
(Diſcourſes are to age continual feaſts)
The love of meat and wine, they recompence,
And cheer the mind, as much as thoſe the Sence.
I'm not more pleas'd with gravity among
The ag'd, than to be youthful with the young;
Nor 'gainſt all pleaſures proclaim open war,
To which, in age, ſome natural motions are.
And ſtill at my *Sabinum* I delight,
To treat my Neighbours till the depth of night.
* But we the ſence and guſt of pleaſure want,
VVhich youth at full poſſeſſes, this I grant;
But age ſeeks not the things which youth requires,
And no man needs that, which he not deſires.

When *Sophocles* was ask'd if he deny'd
Himself the use of pleasures, he reply'd,
I humbly thank the Immortal Gods, who me
From that fierce Tyrants insolence set free:
But they whom pressing appetites constrain,
Grieve when they cannot their desires obtain,
Young men the use of pleasure understand,
As of an object new, and neer at hand:
Though this stands more remote from age's sight,
Yet they behold it not without delight:
As ancient souldiers from their duties eas'd,
VVith sense of Honour and Rewards are pleas'd,
So from ambitious hopes, and lusts releast,
Delighted with it self, our age doth rest.
No part of life's more happy, when with bread
Of ancient Knowledge, and new Learning fed;
All youthful pleasures by degrees must cease,
But those of age even with our years increase.

VVe love not loaded Boards, and Goblets crown'd,
But free from surfets, our repose is sound.
VVhen old *Fabritius* to the Samnites went
Ambassadour from *Rome* to *Pyrrhus* sent;
He heard a grave Philosopher maintain,
That all the actions of our life were vain;
VVhich with our sence of pleasure not conspir'd.
Fabritius the Philosopher desir'd,
That he to *Pyrrhus* would that Maxime teach,
And to the Samnites the same doctrine preach;
Then of their Conquest he should doubt no more,
VVhoth their own pleasures overcame before.
Now into Rustick matters I must fall,
VVhich pleasure seems to me the chief of all.
Age no impediment to those can give,
VVho wisely by the Rules of Nature live.
Earth (though our Mother) cheerfully obeys,
All the commands her race upon her lays.

For whatsoever from our hand she takes,
Greater, or less, a vast return she makes,
Nor am I only pleas'd with that resource,
But with her wayes, her method, and her force,
The seed her bosom (by the plough made fit)
Receives, where kindly she embraces it,
Which with her genuine warmth, diffus'd, and spread
Sends forth betimes a green, and tender head,
Then gives it motion, life, and nourishment,
Which from the root through nerves and veins are sent,
Streight in a hollow sheath upright it grows,
And, form receiving, doth it self disclose,
Drawn up in rancks, and files, the bearded spikes
Guard it from birds as with a stand of pikes,
When of the Vine I speak, I seem inspir'd,
And with delight, as with her juice am fir'd,
At Nature's God-like power I stand amaz'd,
Which such vast bodies hath from Attoms rais'd.

The kernel of a grape, the figs small grain
Can cloath a Mountain, and o'reshade a Plaine;
But thou (dear Vine) forbid it me to be long,
Although thy trunck be neither large, nor strong,
Nor can (thy head (not helpt) it self sublime,
Yet like a Serpent, a tall tree can climb,
What'ere thy many fingers can intwine
Proves thy support, and all it's strength is thine,
Though Nature gave not legs, it gave thee hands,
By which thy prop the proudest Cedar stands,
As thou hast hands, so hath thy off-spring wings,
And to the highest part of Mortals springs,
But lest thou should'st consume thy wealth in vain,
And starve thy self, to feed a numerous train,
Or like the Bee (sweet as thy blood) design'd
To be destroy'd to propagate his kind,
Lest thy redundant, and superfluous juyce,
Should fading leaves instead of fruits produce,

The

The Pruner's hand with timely blood must quench
Thy heat, and thy exuberant parts retrench:
Then from the joynts of thy prolifick stemme
A swelling knot is raised (call'd a gemme)
Whence, in short space, it self the cluster shows,
And from each moisture mixt with Sun-beams grows;
I'th' Spring, like youth, it yields an acid taste,
But Summer doth, like age, the sourness waste,
Then cloath'd with leaves from heat, and cold secure,
Like Virgins, sweet, and beauteous, when mature.
On fruits, flowrs, herbs, and plants, I long could dwell,
At once to please my eye, my taste, my smell,
My Walks of trees, all planted by my hand
Like Children of my own begetting stand,
To tell the several nature of each earth,
What fruits from each most properly take birth:
And with what arts to inrich every mold,
The dry to moysten and to warm the cold,

But when we graft, or Buds inoculate,
Nature by Art we nobly meliorate,
As *Orpheus* Musick wildest beasts did tame,
From the sowr Crab the sweetest Apple came:
The Mother to the Daughter goes to School,
The species changed, doth her laws o're-rule;
Nature her self doth from her self depart,
(Strange transmigration) by the power of Art
How little things, give law to great? we see
The small Bud captivates the greatest Tree.
Here even the Power Divine we imitate,
And seem not to beget, but to create.
Much was I pleas'd with fowls and beasts, the tame
For food and profit, and the wild for game.
Excuse me when this pleasant string I touch,
(For age, of what delights it, speaks too much)
Who, twice victorious *Pyrrhus* conquered,
The *Sabines* and the *Samnites* captive led,

Great *Curius*, his remaining dayes did spend,
And in this happy life his triumphs end.
My Farm stands next, and when I there retire,
His, and that Age's semper I admire.
The *Samnites* chiefs, as by his fire he sate,
With a vast sum of Gold on him did wait,
Return, said he, your Gold I nothing weigh,
When those, who can command it, me obey:
This my assertion proves; he may be old
And yet not sordid, who refuses Gold.
In Summer to sit still, or walk, I love,
Neer a cool Fountain, or a shadie Grove;
What can in Winter readier more delight
Then the high Sun at noon, and fire at night,
While our old friends, and neighbours feast, and play,
And with their harmless mirth turn night to day,
Unpurchas'd plenty our full tables loads,
And part of what they lent, returns to our Gods.

That

That honour, and authority which dwells
With age, all pleasures of our youth excells,
Observe, that I that Age have only prais'd
Whose pillars were on youth's foundations rais'd,
And that (for which I great applause receiv'd)
As a true maxime hath been since believ'd,
That most unhappy age great pity needs,
Which to defend it self, new matter pleads,
Not from gray hairs authority doth flow,
Nor from bald heads, nor from a wrinkled brow,
But our past life, which virtuously spent,
Must to our age those happy fruits present,
Those things to age most Honorable are,
Which cause, common, and but light appear,
Salutes, consulting, complement, resort,
Crouding attendance to, and from the Court,
And not on *Time* alone this honour waits,
But on all Civill, and well-govern'd States.

Lysander

Lysander pleading for his City's praise,
From thence the strongest argument did raise,
That *Sparta* did with honour Age support,
Paying them just respect, at Stage, and Court,
But at proud *Athens* Youth did Age out-face,
Nor at the Plays, would rise, or give them place,
When an *Athenian* Stranger of great age,
Arriv'd at *Sparta*, climbing up the Stage,
To him the whole Assembly rose, and ran
To place and ease this old and reverend man,
Who thus his thanks returns, the *Athenians* know
What's to be done, but what they know, not do.
Here our great Senat's Orders I may quote,
The first in age is still the first in vote,
Nor honour, nor high-birth, nor great command
In competition with great years may stand.
Why should our Youths short, transient pleasures, dare
With Age's lasting honours to compare?

On the World's Scene, when our applause grown high,
For acting here, life's Tragick Comedy,
The lookers on will say we act not well,
Unless she last the former Scenes excell:
But Age is froward, uneasie, scrutinous,
Hard to be pleas'd, and parcimonious;
But all those errors from our Manners rise,
Not from our years, yet some Morosities
We must expect, since jealousie belongs
To age, of scorn, and tender sense of wrongs,
Yes those are mollify'd, or not discern'd,
Where civil arts and manners have been learn'd.
So the Twins humours in our *Terence*, are In his Comedy called *Adelphi*.
Unlike, this harsh, and rude, that smooth and faire.
Our nature here, is not unlike our wine.
Some sorts, when old, continue brisk, and fine,
So Age's gravity may seem severe,
But nothing harsh, or bitter ought to appear,

Of Age's avarice I cannot see
What colour, ground, or reason there should bee,
Is it not folly? when the way we ride
Is short, for a long voyage to provide.
To Avarice some title Youth may own,
To reap in Autumn, what the Spring had sown;
And with the providence of Bees, or Ants,
Prevents with Summers plenty, Winters wants,
But Age scarce sows, till Death stands by to reap,
And to a strangers hand transfers the heap;
Affraid to be so once, she's alwayes poor,
And to avoid a mischief, makes it sure
Such madness, as for fear of death to dy,
Is, to be poor for fear of Poverty.

THE

THE FOURTH PART.

NOw against (that which ennobles our age)
The last, and greatest grievance we engage,
To her, grim death appears in all her shapes,
The hungry grave for her due tribute gapes,
Fond, foolish man! with fear of death surpriz'd,
Which either should be wisht for, or despis'd,
This, if our Souls with Bodies death destroy,
That, if our Souls a second life enjoy,
What else is to be fear'd? when we shall gain
Eternal life, or have no sence of pain,
The youngest in the morning are not sure,
That till the night their life they can secure
Their age stands more expos'd to accidents
Then our's, nor common cure their fate prevents!

Death's

Death's force, with scorn, against Nature strives;
Nor one of many so ripe age arrives.
From this ill fate the world's disorders rise;
For if all men were old, they would be wise:
Years, and experience, our fore-fathers taught,
Them under Laws, and into Cities brought:
Why only should the fear of death belong
To age? which is as common to the young.
Your hopefull Brothers, and my Son, my joy,
(*Scipio*) and me, this maxime makes too true,
But vigorous Youth may his gay thoughts erect
To many years, which Age must not expect,
But when he sees his airy hopes deceiv'd,
With grief he saies, who this would have believ'd?
We happier are then they, who but desir'd
To possess that, which we long since acquir'd.
What if our age to *Nestor*'s could extend?
'Tis vain to think that lasting, which must end;

And

And when 'tis past, not any part remains
Thereof, but the reward which virtue gains.
Dayes, Moaths, and years, like running waters flow,
Nor what is past, nor what's to come we know,
Our date how short so e're must us content,
When a good Actor doth his part present;
In ev'ry Act he our attention draws,
That at the last he may find just applause,
So (though but short) yet we must learn the art
Of virtue, on this Stage to act our part;
True wisdome must our actions so direct,
Not only the last Plaudite to expect;
Yet grieve no more though long that part should last,
Then Husbandmen, because the Spring is past,
The Spring, like Youth, fresh blossoms doth produce,
But Autumne makes them ripe, and fit for use:
So Age a Mature Mellowness doth set
On the green promises of youthfull heat.

All

All things which Nature did ordain, are good,
And so must be receiv'd, and understood,
Age, like ripe Apples, on earth's bosom drops,
Whil'st force our youth, like fruits untimely crops;
The sparkling flame of our warm blood expires,
As when huge streams are pour'd on raging fires,
But age unfore'd falls by her own consent,
As Coals to ashes, when the Spirit's spent;
Therefore to death I with such joy resort,
As Seamen from a Tempest to their Port,
Yet to that Port our selves we must not force,
Before our Pilot Nature steers our course,
Let us the Causes of our fear condemn,
Then death at his approach we shall contemn,
Though to our heat of youth our age seems cold,
Yet when resolv'd, it is more brave and bold,
Thus *Solon* to *Pisistratus* reply'd,
Demanded, on what succour he rely'd;

VVhen with so few he boldly did ingage,
He said, he took his courage from his Age.
Then death seems welcome, and our Nature kind,
VVhen leaving us a perfect sense and mind;
She (like a VVorkman in his Science skill'd)
Pulls down with ease, what her own hand did build.
That Art which knew to joyn all parts in one,
Makes the least violent separation.
Yet though our Ligaments betimes grow weak,
We must not force them till themselves they break.
Pythag'ras bids us in our Station stand,
Till God our General shall us disband,
Wise *Solon* dying, wisht his friends might grieve,
That in their memories he still might live.
Yet wiser *Ennius* gave command to all
His friends, not to bewail his funeral;
Your tears for such a death in vain you spend,
Which strait in immortality shall end.

In

In death if there be any ſenſe of pain,
But a ſhort ſpace, to age it will remain.
On which without my fears, my wiſhes wait,
But timorous youth on this ſhould meditate:
Who for light pleaſure this advice rejects,
Finds little, when his thoughts he recollects.
Our death (though not its certain date) we know,
Nor whether it may be this night, or no:
How then can they contented live? who fear
A danger certain, and none knows how near.
They erre, who for the fear of death diſpute,
Our gallant actions this miſtake confute.
Thee (*Brutus*) *Rome*'s firſt Martyr I muſt name,
The *Curtii* bravely div'd the Gulph of Flame:
Attilius ſacrific'd himſelf, to ſave
That faith, which to his barb'rous foes he gave;
With the two *Scipio*'s did thy Uncle fall,
Rather to fly from Conquering *Hannibal*.

The great *Marcellus* (who restored *Rome*)
His greatest foes with Honour did intomb.
Their Lives how many of our Legions threw,
Into the breach? whence no return they knew;
Must then the wise, the old, the learned fear,
What not the rude, the young, th' unlearn'd forbear?
Satiety from all things else doth come,
Then life must to it self grow wearisome.
Those Trifles wherein Children take delight,
Grow nauceous to the young man's appetite,
And from those gaieties our youth requires,
To exercise their minds, our age retires.
And when the last delights of Age shall die,
Life in it self will find satietie.
Now you (my friends) my sense of death shall hear,
Which I can well describe, for he stands near.
Your Father *Lelius*, and yours *Scipio*,
My friends, and men of honour I did know;

As certainly as we muſt die, they live
That life which juſtly may that name receive.
Till from theſe priſons of our fleſh releas'd,
Our ſouls with heavy burdens lie oppreſs'd;
Which part of man from Heaven falling down,
Earth in her low Abyſſe, doth hide, and drown.
A place ſo dark to the Celeſtial light,
And pure, eternal fires quite oppoſite.
The Gods through humane bodies did diſperſe
An heavenly ſoul, to guide this Univerſe;
That man, when he of heavenly bodies ſaw
The Order, might from thence a pattern draw:
Nor this to me did my own dictates ſhow
But to the old Philoſophers I owe,
I heard *Pythagoras*, and thoſe who came
With him, and from our Countrey took their Name.
Who never doubted but the beams divine
Deriv'd from Gods, in mortal breaſts did ſhine.

Nor from my knowledge did the Antients hide
What *Socrates* declar'd, the hour he dy'd,
He th' Immortality of Souls proclaim'd,
(Whom th' Oracle of men the wiſeſt nam'd)
Why ſhould we doubt of that? whereof our ſence
Finds demonſtration from experience;
Our minds are here and there, below, above;
Nothing that's mortal can ſo ſwiftly move.
Our thoughts to future things their flight direct,
And in an inſtant all that's paſt collect,
Reaſon, remembrance, wit, inventive art,
No nature, but immortal, can impart.
Man's Soul in a perpetual motion flowes,
And to no outward cauſe that Motion owes;
And therefore, that, no end can overtake,
Becauſe our minds cannot themſelves forſake.
And ſince the matter of our Soul is pure,
And ſimple, which no mixture can endure

Of

Of parts, which nor among themſelves agree;
Therefore it never can divided be.
And Nature ſhews (without Philoſophy)
VVhat cannot be divided, cannot die.
VVe even in early infancy diſcern,
Knowledge is born with babes before they learn;
Ere they can ſpeak, they find ſo many wayes
To ſerve their turn, and ſee more Arts than dayes,
Before their thoughts they plainly can expreſſe,
The words and things they know are numberleſſe;
Which Nature only, and no Art could find,
But what ſhe taught before, ſhe call'd to mind.
This to his Sons (as *Xenophon* records)
Of the great *Cyrus* were the dying words;
Fear not when I depart (nor therefore mourn)
I ſhall be no where, or to nothing turn:
That Soul, which gave me life, was ſeen by none,
Yet by the actions it deſign'd, was known;

And though its flight no mortal eye shall see,
Yet know, for ever it the same shall be.
That Soul, which can immortal glory give,
To her own Vertues must for ever live.
Can you believe, that man's all-knowing mind
Can to a mortal body be confin'd?
Though a foul, foolish prison her immure
On earth, she (when escap'd) is wise, and pure.
Man's body when dissolv'd is but the same
With beasts, and must return from whence it came;
But whence into our bodys reason flowes,
None sees it, when it comes, or where it goes.
Nothing resembles death so much as sleep,
Yet then our minds themselves from slumber keep.
When from their fleshly bondage they are free,
Then what divine, and future things they see?
Which makes it most apparent whence they are,
And what they shall hereafter be declare.

This

This Noble Speech the dying *Cyrus* made.
Me (*Scipio*) ſhall no argument perſwade,
Thy Grandfire, and his Brother, to whom Fame
Gave from two conquer'd parts o'th' World, their Name,
Nor thy great Grandfire, nor thy Father *Paul*,
Who fell at *Canna* againſt *Hannibal*;
Nor I (for 'tis permitted to the ag'd
To boaſt their actions) had ſo oft ingag'd
In Battels, and in Pleadings, had we thought,
That only Fame our vertuous actions bought,
'Twere better in ſoft pleaſure and repoſe
Inglorioufly our peaceful eyes to cloſe:
Some high aſſurance hath poſſeſt my mind,
After my death, an happier life to find.
Unleſs our Souls from the Immortals came,
What end have we to ſeek Immortal Fame?
All vertuous ſpirits ſome ſuch hope attends,
Therefore the wiſe his dayes with pleaſure ends.

The fooliſh and ſhort-ſighted die with fear,
That they go no where, or they know not where.
The wiſe and vertuous Soul with clearer eyes
Before ſhe parts, ſome happy Port diſcries.
My friends, your Fathers I ſhall ſurely ſee,
Nor only thoſe I lov'd, or who lov'd me;
But ſuch as before ours did end their daies:
Of whom we hear, and read, and write their praiſe.
This I believe, for were I on my way,
None ſhould perſwade me to return, or ſtay:
Should ſome God tell me, that I ſhould be born,
And cry again, his offer I ſhould ſcorn;
Aſham'd when I have ended well my race,
To be led back, to my firſt ſtarting place.
And ſince with life we are more griev'd than joy'd,
We ſhould be either ſatisfi'd, or cloy'd;
Yet will not I my length of dayes deplore,
As many wiſe and learn'd have done before:

Nor

Nor can I think such life in vain is lent,
Which for our Country and our friends is spent.
Hence from an Inne, not from my home, I pass,
Since Nature meant us here no dwelling place.
Happy when I from this turmoil set free,
That peaceful and divine assembly see:
Not only those I nam'd I there shall greet,
But my own gallant vertuous *Cato* meet.
Nor did I weep, when I to ashes turn'd
His belov'd body, who should mine have burn'd:
I in my thoughts beheld his Soul ascend,
Where his fixt hopes our Interview attend:
Then cease to wonder that I feel no grief
From Age, which is of my delights the chief.
My hope's, if this assurance hath deceiv'd,
(That I Man's Soul Immortal have believ'd)
And if I erre, no Pow'r shall dispossess
My thoughts of that expected happiness.

Though ſome minute Philoſophers pretend,
That with our dayes our pains and pleaſures end,
If it be ſo, I hold the ſafer ſide,
For none of them my Error ſhall deride.
And if hereafter no rewards appear,
Yet Vertue hath it ſelf rewarded here.
If thoſe who this Opinion have deſpis'd,
And their whole life to pleaſure ſacrific'd;
Should feel their error, they when undeceiv'd,
Too late will wiſh, that me they had believ'd.
If Souls no Immortality obtain,
'Tis fit our bodies ſhould be out of pain.
The ſame uneaſineſs, which every thing
Gives to our Nature, life muſt alſo bring.
Good Acts (if long) ſeem tedious, ſo is Age
Acting too long upon this Earth her Stage.
Thus much for Age, to which when you arrive,
That Joy to you, which it gives me, 'twill give.

FINIS.